

## Upcoming Events

January 2023

### National Mentoring Month

### Religious Freedom Day/World Religion Day

January 15

### Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Federal Holiday observed)

January 16

### International Holocaust Remembrance Day

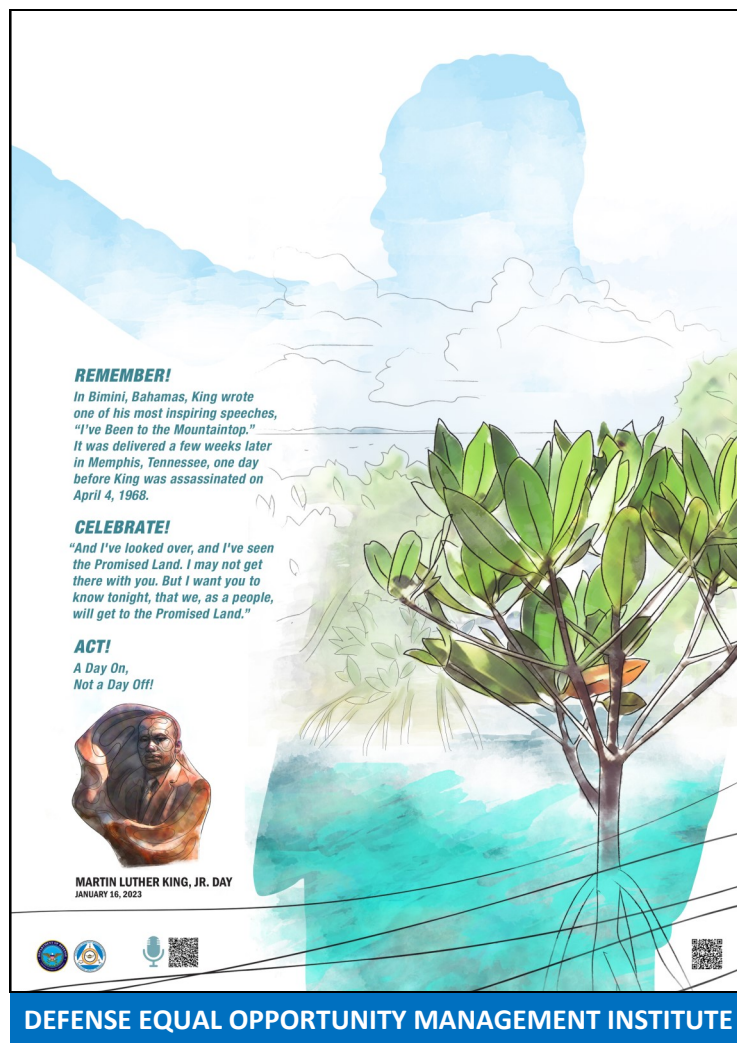
January 27

## ORMDI

### Steps Toward Conflict Resolution

You can contact ORMDI toll-free at 1-888-566-3982 (TDD/TTY, dial 711 before providing this number) and speak with a specialist regarding equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaint processing or harassment prevention. You must initiate contact with an EEO counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged act of discrimination by calling 1-888-566-3982 or visiting your local ORMDI Field Office. The harassment prevention procedures do not affect rights under the EEO complaint process.

Harassment should be reported immediately to a manager or supervisor, Harassment Prevention Coordinator, or the Harassment Prevention Program. For Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services, email the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer [ADR team](#).



## Commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

VA joins the Nation in commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 16, 2023. Public Law 98-144 established this federal holiday observed each year on the third Monday in January, around the date of Dr. King's actual birthday on January 15. The recurring theme for this annual observance is "Remember! Celebrate! Act! A Day On...Not A Day Off."

MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a National Day of Service to encourage all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities ([AmeriCorps](#)). Some service suggestions listed on the [AmeriCorps](#) website include:

- Honor Dr. King and host your own conversations over dinner (or other meal) that foster a sense of constructive action, civic participation and belonging and combat the corrosive effects of hate on our democracy and safety.
- Remove graffiti from a building and paint a mural, create community green spaces by planting trees, grass and flowers, especially in locations that may lack adequate green space.
- Support those who are recovering from disasters; the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster serves as a clearing house for anyone who wants to help communities and individuals recover from disasters.

For more information, visit [VA's Black/African American Special Emphasis Program webpage on the ORMDI website](#) or contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, VA's Departmental Black/African American Special Emphasis Program Manager, ORMDI.



DAS Johnson

## Message from the DAS

Harvey Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion

Happy New Year, VA! This January, keep an eye out for the inaugural issue of the quarterly *Ignite I\*DEA* newsletter. *Ignite* will highlight successes and individual initiatives within the I\*DEA initiative. It will be hosted on the I\*DEA SharePoint site where other resources are available to VA employees including 18 different VA I\*DEA virtual backgrounds for the TEAMS application. For information on how to access this SharePoint site, please contact Dr. Jennifer (Jenna) Moffit.

Thank you for all you do and let's keep up the good work in 2023!

## Policy Alert

### EEO, Diversity and Inclusion, No FEAR, and Whistleblower Rights and Protection Policy Statement

Secretary McDonough signed the [Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion, No FEAR, and Whistleblower Rights and Protection Policy Statement](#). This policy statement summarizes VA's EEO, Diversity and Inclusion, Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act (No FEAR), and Whistleblower Rights and Protection policies.

## National Diversity Internship Program

### Consider a 2023 Summer Intern

Managed by the Human Capital Services Center (HCSC), the National Diversity Internship Program (NDIP) provides internship opportunities and invaluable work experience in VA career fields to diverse undergraduate and graduate students who are currently enrolled, full-time or part-time, in a degree-seeking program at accredited post-secondary institutions, including Minority Serving Institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Asian American Colleges, Pacific Islander Serving Institutions and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

This internship program requires each student to complete up to 40 hours per week on site at a VA location. Student skills, knowledge, experience and abilities will generally be matched with a suitable intern position. NDIP interns will not be placed in positions such as clinical settings, direct patient care, processing clinical data, or research positions that fall under the purview of the Veterans Health Administration Office of Academic Affiliations.

Students interested in internships must apply directly to one of the approved vendors listed on the [NDIP website](#). Students selected for a NDIP internship are employees of the contracted vendor and receive a bi-weekly stipend.

VA organizations requesting to host a student intern must:

- Receive approval from the appropriate organizational official (Director, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Branch Chief, etc.) to authorize sponsorship of an intern.
- Assign a primary and alternate mentor who will be on site to interact with the intern and provide guidance on project tasks and assignments. Additional requirements are detailed in the mentor agreement available from the NDIP Application Portal.
- Obtain approval for funding prior to applying.
- Submit a completed application and all required documents by the deadlines listed below.

To apply for a NDIP intern, prospective mentors may complete a NDIP application available from the NDIP Application Portal. Applications for the summer session (June through August 2023) will be accepted until January 6, 2023. A separate application must be completed for each intern requested. All applications must include a signed mentor agreement, nondisclosure agreement, and signed funding document (VA Form 90-2237 or iFAMS Integrated Purchase Request) for the estimated cost of the NDIP internship. For more information, visit the [NDIP website](#). For access to the NDIP Application Portal, contact the [HCSC NDIP Manager](#).

## Federal Internship Portal

### USAJOBS Internship Webpage Now Under Development

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will be publicly launching an exciting USAJOBS internship page at the end of January 2023. OPM, Department of Labor and the Office of Management and Budget are collaborating to develop [intern.usajobs.gov](https://intern.usajobs.gov), which will be a one-stop shop for prospective interns to find 2023 internship opportunities across government and drive increased applicant traffic to agency internship postings.

To best align with the academic year and increase our chances of recruiting a large and diverse Federal intern candidate pool, OPM is asking that VA post their 2023 internship opportunities to the portal by January 13, 2023, with a focus on summer 2023 internship opportunities. Agencies will be able to post information about any internships they offer—for example, Pathway's internships and openings under the Post-Secondary Hiring Authority.

The [Pathways Program Management Office \(PPMO\)](#) would greatly appreciate it if you could please work with your hiring managers, Human Resources Office and talent management colleagues to identify positions for summer internships.

In addition to the guidance on increasing paid internship opportunities, OPM is developing training and resources for HR specialists and hiring managers to help improve outreach, recruitment and retention of interns.

The PPMO looks forward to working together to recruit terrific 2023 intern cohorts!

## 2023 FAPAC Civilian Awards

### Nomination Period Now Open

The Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) is accepting nominations for the [2023 FAPAC Civilian Awards](#) through Friday, February 17, 2023. **Reach out to your VA Administration or Staff Office Awards Team prior to making a nomination.**

These awards recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities and promote diversity and inclusion among the Federal and District of Columbia government workforces.

One winner will be selected per category, per grade cluster (GS 1-12, GS 13-15, and Senior Executive Service) for a total of nine (9) awards. The categories are:

- Outstanding Individual Leadership
- Excellence in Individual Achievement
- Diversity Excellence

Last year, four VA employees were recognized with a FAPAC Civilian Award. The 2023 awards will be presented at the 38th National Leadership Training Program to be held during AANHPI Heritage Month, May 8-11, 2023, at the Westin Long Beach in California. For questions, [contact the FAPAC awards team](#).

## VA SEPMs National Group Teams Channel

### Working Together Under One Umbrella

ORMDI established a new Teams channel where VA Special Emphasis Program Managers (SEPMs) can gather to share best practices, working documents, discuss trends and barriers within their respective programs and brainstorm ways to address such barriers. Additionally, SEPMs will collaborate and provide guidance and assistance with VA's special observances events. The goal is to enhance VA's special emphasis programs (SEPs) by connecting SEPMs across the enterprise while sharing innovative ways to elevate SEPs throughout VA. SEPMs interested in joining the Teams channel or for more information, please contact Ms. Tynnetta Lee, ORMDI.

# Affirmatively Advancing DEIA for Persons with Disabilities

## Presidential Proclamation on International Observance Emphasizes Opportunities Throughout the Year

International Day of Persons with Disabilities was proclaimed by the United Nations (UN) in 1992 to be annually observed on December 3rd. As reported last month, the UN's 2022 theme was: "Transformative solutions for inclusive development: the role of innovation in fueling an accessible and equitable world" ([UN](#)). Instead of limiting its relevance to just one day, this theme should be adopted throughout the new year.

Synchronizing the National perspective with this international observance, the [2022 Presidential Proclamation](#) stated, "On International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we recognize and celebrate the equal rights and dignity of disabled people everywhere and reaffirm our commitment to building a world where people with disabilities are afforded the opportunities, independence, and respect they deserve." This promise must also be applied to our efforts here at VA.

Highlighting the significance of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Proclamation stated, "[I]n the years since the ADA became law, 180 nations have passed similar laws, delivering justice to millions worldwide. But we have more work to do." In alignment with [Executive Order 14035](#) on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce, VA can catalyze and accelerate transformative innovative solutions to be exponentially enterprising for advancing accessibility for persons with disabilities.

VA also remains focused on ensuring equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in recruitment, employment, accommodation, retention and advancement. As of the end of fiscal year 2022, persons with disabilities represented 14.93 percent and persons with targeted disabilities represented 3.32 percent of VA's permanent workforce for grade clusters below GS-11. Persons with disabilities represented 9.51 percent and persons with targeted disabilities represented 1.54 percent of VA's permanent workforce for grade clusters at and above GS-11. Veterans represented 28.67 percent of VA's permanent workforce, of which Disabled Veterans represented 46.61 percent.

For more information, visit [VA's Individuals with Disabilities Employment Program on the ORMDI website](#).

## The Workforce Recruitment Program - Diversifying VA's Talent

### Database of Candidates Now Available

The Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) connects VA to students and recent graduates with disabilities. WRP participants are eager to demonstrate their abilities in the workplace and are waiting for their opportunity to serve their country in the best way they can—by dedicating their careers to public service. Some candidates are at the beginning of their career, looking for someone to see past their disability and hire them for a job they are more than capable of doing. Other candidates are disabled Veterans re-entering the workforce who need a helping hand. All candidates are qualified, job-ready applicants from across the Nation.

Coupled with the [Schedule A Hiring Authority](#), WRP ensures equitable access to employment by offering opportunities for people with disabilities to apply and interview for jobs. For VA hiring managers, it simplifies the hiring process by allowing you to skip the competitive hiring process and reach candidates directly regarding open positions.

Each December, WRP releases a database of more than 2,000 resumes from college students, graduate students and recent graduates with disabilities from a wide variety of majors and backgrounds. All WRP candidates are [Schedule A](#) eligible, which allows you to hire without posting a job announcement or going through the certification process. Within the WRP database you can sort, and filter candidates based on major, degree, job, location preference and more.

To access the WRP database, visit the [WRP.gov employer page](#) and create an account. For access to the Human Capital Services Center (HCSC) WRP SharePoint page or to join HCSC for a Lunch and Learn on January 12 or February 16, 2023, contact the [HCSC WRP team](#) or visit the [VA WRP page](#) for more information.



Office of Human Resources & Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness  
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